



*News Release from Congressman*

# ROB SIMMONS

SECOND DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: JOHN GOODWIN

202/225-2076

## CONNECTICUT'S ENVIRONMENT GAINS IN HOUSE-PASSED LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Rob Simmons, R-2<sup>nd</sup> District, today announced the House of Representatives late last night passed an annual spending measure that funds four important environmental projects in Connecticut. Simmons requested the projects earlier this year.

The House-passed fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill contains \$1.8 million for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Long Island Sound program office. An additional \$500,000 from the federal estuaries program will fund a habitat restoration program which will include nitrogen reduction efforts.

"The Long Island Sound is a source of livelihood, nourishment and recreation for many in Connecticut," Simmons said. "The money included in today's bill preserves the water quality of the sound for both the Connecticut residents who live along the sound and the wildlife which lives in it."

The measure also includes \$800,000 for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (QSHC). Often referred to the "Last Green Valley," the QSHC encompasses about 695,000 acres in northeastern Connecticut and south-central Massachusetts. The federal dollars will go toward the development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical, and recreational land resource management programs. Since coming to Congress, Simmons has helped secure nearly \$6 million for the program.

Charlene Cutler, executive director of the QSHC, welcomed the funding news. "We appreciate Congressman Simmons' efforts. The work we are doing in The Last Green Valley is considered critical by our communities, residents and other partners. Continued funding will contribute to both the preservation of resources, as well as increased economic development. It is a good value for the federal investment."

The House also provided \$2 million for the acquisition of the Johnson Tract in East Haddam. The acquisition of the 289-acre parcel is part of a four-state effort to include 2,550 contiguous acres to be added to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. This year's funding will be added to the \$650,000 secured by Simmons in 2005.

"The purchase of the Johnson Tract is a true public-private partnership that joins government on all levels together with land trusts and land owners to encourage voluntary conservation so that Connecticut remains green," Simmons said.

Finally, the annual spending measure provided \$550,000 for the Thompsonville section of Enfield to eliminate the inflow of surface storm water into its sanitary sewer system. This important clean water infrastructure project will help preserve water quality for the residents of Enfield.

Simmons concluded, "Last night's action by the House of Representatives touches nearly all four corners of eastern Connecticut. From the shores of the Long Island Sound, to the open spaces of Johnson Tract, up to Enfield and over to the Quiet Corner of the Last Green Valley, this year's Interior spending bill preserves and protects many of our environmental treasures."

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